

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Proposed Action: Approve Drilling Permit (Form 22)

Project/Well Name: Coral Creek Unit MC 31-16NH

Operator: Denbury Onshore, LLC

Location: T6N, R60E, Sec 16 NWNE

County: Fallon MT; **Field (or Wildcat):** Coral Creek

Proposed Project Date: 7/15/2021

I. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

Denbury Onshore plans to drill a horizontal well into the Mission Canyon Formation 13,432' MD / 7,179' TVD. Surface casing to be set at 2,000' and cemented to surface.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, GWIC website (Fallon County Wells).

US Fish and Wildlife, Region 6 website

ENDANGERED, THREATENED, PROPOSED AND CANDIDATE SPECIES MONTANA COUNTIES, Fallon County

Montana Natural Heritage Program Website (FWP)

Heritage State Rank= S1, S2, S3, T6N R60E

Montana Cadastral Website

Surface Ownership and surface use Section 16 T6N R60E

Montana Department of Natural Resources MEPA Submittal

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No Action Alternative: The proposed well would not be drilled.

Action Alternative: Denbury Onshore, LLC. would have permission to drill the well.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. AIR QUALITY

Long drilling time: No, 7-10 days.

Unusually deep drilling (high horsepower rig): No, triple derrick rig.

Possible H₂S gas production: Yes, possible H₂S gas, slight chance from Mississippian Formations.

In/near Class I air quality area: No Class I air quality area in the area of review.

Air quality permit for flaring/venting (if productive): Yes, DEQ air quality permit required under 75-2-211. AQB review.

Comments: No special concerns – using rig to drill to 13,432' MD / 7,179' TVD. If there are no gas gathering systems nearby, associated gas can be flared under Board Rule 36.22.1220.

4. WATER QUALITY

Salt/oil based mud: Surface hole to be drilled with freshwater mud system. Intermediate hole to be drilled with oil based mud system. Production hole to be drilled with saltwater based mud system.

High water table: No high-water table at this well location.

Surface drainage leads to live water: No, A stock pond exists 1/10 of a mile to the southeast, Buffalo Creek (ephemeral) flows out of this pond. Another stock pond exists 3/10 of mile to the southwest.

Water well contamination: No water wells in ½ mile radius.

Porous/permeable soils: Sandy clay.

Class I stream drainage: No class I streams in the area.

Groundwater vulnerability area: No.

Mitigation:

☐ Lined reserve pit:

☒ Adequate surface casing

☐ Berms/dykes, re-routed drainage

☒ Closed mud system

☒ Off-site disposal of **solids**/liquids (in approved facility)

Comments: Steel surface casing to be set and cemented to surface to protect ground water. (Rule 36.22.1001).

5. SOILS/VEGETATION/LAND USE

Vegetation: Area is grassland.

Stream crossings: No stream crossings anticipated.

High erosion potential: Small cut of 9.9' and medium fill of 10.1' required.

Loss of soil productivity: No, location will be restored after drilling if nonproductive.

Unusually large wellsite (Describe dimensions): No, 470' X 350' location for a two well pad.

Damage to improvements: Slight.

Conflict with existing land use/values: Slight.

Mitigation

☐ Avoid improvements (topographic tolerance)

☐ Exception location requested

☒ Stockpile topsoil

☐ Stream Crossing Permit (other agency review)

☒ Reclaim unused part of wellsite if productive

☐ Special construction methods to enhance reclamation

Access Road: Access will be off existing dirt road, an access of 148' will be built into location.

Drilling fluids/solids: All solids will be hauled to a licensed disposal facility. Liquids will be recycled.

6. HEALTH HAZARDS/NOISE

Proximity to public facilities/residences: No residents within a ½ mile radius.

Possibility of H2S: Yes, possible H2S gas, slight chance from Mississippian Formations.

Size of rig/length of drilling time: Triple derrick rig, 7 -10 days drilling time.

Mitigation:

☒ Proper BOP equipment

☐ Topographic sound barriers

☐ H2S contingency and/or evacuation plan

☐ Special equipment/procedures requirements

☐ Other:

7. WILDLIFE/RECREATION

Sage Grouse: In Core habitat and requires sage grouse approval from the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. Denbury submitted Sage Grouse review letter to Sage Grouse Program. Program analysis received 5-13-21.

Proximity to sensitive wildlife areas (DFWP identified): None.

Proximity to recreation sites: None.

Creation of new access to wildlife habitat: No.

Conflict with game range/refuge management: No.

Threatened or endangered Species: Species listed as endangered or threatened in Fallon County are the Whooping Crane, Northern Long-eared Bat, and piping Plover. The Montana Natural Heritage Program website lists four (4) species of concern: Great Blue Heron, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Greater Sage-Grouse, Brewer's Sparrow.

Mitigation:

☐ Avoidance (topographic tolerance/exception)

☒ Other agency review (DFWP, federal agencies, **DNRC Trust Lands**)

☐ Screening/fencing of pits, drillsite

☐ Other:

Comments: State of Montana leased grazing surface lands. There may be possible historical/cultural/paleontological sites that maybe impacted by this wellsite. We ask the operator to consult with the surface owner as to his desires to preserve these sites or not, if they are found during construction of the wellsite. State of Montana "Trust Lands" minerals and surface. Trust Lands will do surface EA.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

8. HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL

Proximity to known sites:

Mitigation

☐ avoidance (topographic tolerance, location exception)

☒ other agency review (SHPO, DNRC **Trust Lands**, federal agencies)

Other:

9. SOCIAL/ECONOMIC

Substantial effect on tax base

☐ Create demand for new governmental services

☐ Population increase or relocation

Comments: No concerns.

IV. SUMMARY

No long term impacts expected. Some short term impacts will occur, but can be mitigated.

I conclude that the approval of the subject Notice of Intent to Drill (does/**does not**) constitute a major action of state government significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and (does/**does not**) require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name:	John Gizicki
	Title:	Compliance Specialist
Signature:		Date: 05/13/21